Washington State Department of
Early Learning

Q and A
Pilot project—Web-based licensing forms

The Department of Early Learning (DEL) recently concluded a short pilot project to test whether using Web-based forms would be a good option for our child care licensing work.

Following are a few facts about the pilot. We are evaluating the pilot before deciding whether to use Web-based forms as part of child care licensing in the future.

What was the purpose of this pilot? We were looking at whether we could give our child care licensors portable tools to make licensing visits more efficient. The tools include "tablet" computers, which licensors already use at their office desks, as well as software and portable printers.

We wanted to test whether having these tools on-site during licensing visits would streamline the paperwork needed during the visit, and allow for more time for licensors and providers to work together on technical assistance and support.

What did the software do? The software helps format inspection reports and complaint findings. This way, licensors can print out reports, including compliance agreements, on-site during the licensing visit. Providers were still able to review hard copies of documents created during the visit.

How many licensors took part in this pilot? Nine DEL licensors, three support staff, three licensing supervisors and the six assistant service area managers and service area managers were part of the pilot.

How long did the pilot last? About four weeks. We are now reviewing the information gathered during the pilot to make decisions about whether to pursue Web-based forms for licensing.

How much did the pilot cost, and how did DEL pay for it? The pilot cost $64,820, which included training and use of the software. This was paid for with federal Child Care and Development Fund dollars.

What's next? We are evaluating the results of the pilot, including feedback from our staff and from providers. Any decisions will be communicated to our child care provider community.

December 30, 2009